

## **Lemhi County Wildland Urban Interface Identification**

The Lemhi County Wildland Hazardous Fuels Reduction Committee was tasked with the assignment of identifying, and mapping the county boundary for Wildland Urban Interface.

This process was accomplished through several meetings of the working committee.

With the collaboration of the County Commissioners, Bureau of Land Management, Salmon -Challis National Forest Service, Leadore Fire Department, Lemhi County Fire Protection District, Salmon Fire Department, Gibbonsville Fire District, Elk Bend Fire Department, Lemhi County Emergency Services, and Lemhi County Wildland Urban Interface. Through a series of meetings WUI boundaries and map were completed. Using the guidelines identified by the Healthy Forest Act and National Fire Plan the committee developed Wildland Urban Interface criteria and boundaries for Lemhi County.

Due to the complexity of Lemhi County and the ever changing status of fuel load, weather conditions, population and development of properties in the interface areas, the committee unanimously agreed the WUI boundaries will be reevaluated annually, and redefined.

### **Criteria :**

- Human life
- Private properties, with /without structure
- Past Fire History
- Spotting distance
- Fuel density and load
- Fire Behavior
- Historical Starts
- Major drainages
- Fire Regime Condition Class
- Preservation of public areas
- Evacuation routes/ Highways/thruways

Lemhi County was divided into 3 sections.

**Section one:** North: Tower Creek area to Lost Trail Pass all are East and West of this area including Wilderness; East: all area to county line.

**Section two:** North: City of Salmon to Tower Creek, South Hwy 93 to Ellis county line, including Pahsimeroi Valley, West: Jesse Creek watershed, East: all area to the county line

**Section three:** East: City of Salmon, Birch Creek, county line, Northeast to county line, and South to county line.

Due to the high index of all the criteria in defining the WUI boundaries. Identification is as follows. As identified in Lemhi County's original plan the area in all sections one through three will have a 1 ½ WUI buffer line in high index areas. This boundary was established by the following steps.

Section One:

1. Original boundary line to be mapped per GIS mapping at the Forest Service with a 1 ½ mile WUI boundary as mentioned in The Healthy Forest Restoration Act

2. After review of mapped boundary agreed to break the section down to subsection.

\*Tower creek (dumpster location) to North Fork, North Fork to the State line. The WUI boundary will remain at 1 ½ mile due to steep terrain, spotting distance, population, identified evacuation areas, evacuation routes, beetle epidemic, heavy fuels, timber and limited access.

\*North Fork to Shoup and the road ending at the river will remain 1 ½ mile buffer zone.

Criteria: steep terrain, spotting distance, population, identified evacuation areas, evacuation routes, beetle epidemic, heavy fuels, timber and limited access. This area is also subject to massive debris flows after forest fires, which have closed the evacuation routes.

This was mapped and reviewed at following meeting.

3. The mapping was reviewed and accepted by Committee and Lemhi County Commissioners.

Section two:

1. Original boundary line to be mapped per GIS mapping at the Forest Service with a 1 ½ boundary in accordance to The Healthy Forest Restoration Act.

2. After review of mapping, the section was also divided into subsection.

\*North Hwy 93 from salmon to Tower creek (dumpster location) on the east side the WUI buffer should be reduced to ¼ mile buffer with a ¼ mile buffer from property lines. To the west side of state highway 93 North the 1 1/2 WUI buffer will remain. This agreement was met with the history of the fire behavior during the Finster Fire.

\*Jesse Creek, City of Salmon west; Jesse Creek watershed must be included in the 1 ½ mile WUI buffer and to extent 1 ½ mile outside the watershed area. The western boundary WUI buffer will be in place 1 ½ mile outside the watershed at the hydrographic divide to prevent forest fires from reaching within the municipal watershed, road-less area.

\* Hwy 93 to Ellis-county line, including Pahsimeroi Valley.

The WUI buffer on State highway 93 South from Salmon to the county line will remain a 1 ½ mile WUI buffer due to the closeness of private property boundaries, terrain, and vegetation. Also the 1 ½ WUI buffer will include the ridge road and/or ridge to the east of Williams Lake and follow along the ridge road and/or ridge to Iron Creek road. Agreement due to, steep terrain, spotting distance, population, beetle epidemic, heavy fuels, timber, and limited access. The Withington Creek fire used as an example for sever fire behavior in this area.

\*The Pahsimeroi watershed are WUI buffer will be reduced to ½ mile buffer from private property lines. Due to the fact that the bottom of the valley is a green zone and the grazing practice is in place. However the committee decided that the WUI buffer would be reevaluated in the event that grazing practice ended.

3. Mapping reviewed and accepted by Committee and Lemhi County Commissioners.

Section three:

1. Original boundary line to be mapped per GIS mapping at the Forest Service with a 1 ½ boundary in accordance to The Healthy Forest Restoration Act

2. After review of mapping, the section was also divided into subsections.

\*Salmon to Leadore the Old Lemhi Road, (located to the East of state highway 28) going east ¼ mile off the Old Lemhi Road would be the starting point of the ½ mile WUI buffer. There will be a ½ mile WUI buffer from private property line due to the green zone and grazing.

\* Salmon to Leadore west side of state highway 28 starting point is at ½ mile and ½ mile WUI buffer from private property lines due to the grazing practice at this time. However the committee decided that the WUI buffer would be reevaluated in the event that grazing practice ended.

\*City of Leadore to the county line, starting point be at ½ mile from state highway 28, and ½ mile WUI buffer from private property lines due to the grazing practice at this time. However the committee decided that the WUI buffer would be reevaluated in the event that grazing practice ended.

3. Mapping reviewed and accepted by Committee and Lemhi County Commissioners.